

APPENDIX A

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Previously Presented) A wiper pivot unit comprising:
a pivot shaft having a proximal end and a distal end to which a wiper arm is fixed;
a pivot holder fixed to a vehicle body;
a bearing portion formed in the pivot holder and rotatably supporting the pivot shaft; and
a locking member for restricting axial movement of the pivot shaft with respect to the bearing portion, wherein the pivot shaft includes a small-diameter section formed over a predetermined length from the distal end side, and a large-diameter section, which has a diameter larger than that of the small-diameter section, formed on the proximal end side, the large-diameter section having an end portion in the proximity of the small-diameter section, wherein the locking member is engaged with a predetermined frictional force against an external surface at the end portion of the large-diameter section, wherein when a thrust load of a predetermined value or more is applied to the pivot shaft toward the proximal end, restriction of axial movement of the pivot shaft by the locking member is removed, the pivot shaft starts moving with respect to the bearing portion, the locking member is moved to the small-diameter section, the

frictional force is reduced, and the thrust load required to move the pivot shaft is reduced to substantially half of the thrust load that is required to start moving the pivot shaft with respect to the bearing portion.

2. (Original) The wiper unit according to claim 1, wherein the predetermined frictional force is a result of a constricting force of the locking member against the outer surface of the pivot shaft.

3. (Original) The wiper pivot unit according to claim 1, wherein the small-diameter section protrudes entirely from the bearing portion and the large-diameter section is located in the bearing portion in the state where the locking member restricts axial movement of the pivot shaft with respect to the bearing portion.

4. (Original) The wiper pivot unit according to claim 1, wherein the small-diameter section has a constant diameter along the axis of the pivot shaft and protrudes from the bearing portion.

5. (Previously Presented) The wiper pivot unit according to claim 1, wherein the pivot shaft further has a fixing section for fixing the wiper arm at the distal end side of the small-diameter section, wherein the small-diameter section is formed over a predetermined length between the fixing section and the large-diameter section.

6. (Cancelled)

7. (Original) The wiper pivot unit according to claim 1, wherein the pivot shaft has a tapered surface, which connects the large-diameter section and the small-diameter section.

8. (Original) The wiper pivot unit according to claim 5, wherein the fixing section has a tapered rotation preventing portion having a knurled surface and a threaded portion formed on the distal end side of the rotation preventing portion.

9. (Previously Presented) The wiper pivot unit according to claim 1, wherein the locking member includes a ring-shaped toothed washer having a plurality of locking pieces protruding inward, the locking pieces defining a through hole, wherein the diameter of the small-diameter section, the diameter of the large-diameter section and the inside diameter of the through hole of the toothed washer before it is fitted to the pivot shaft are designed to produce a kinetic frictional force between the toothed washer and the small-diameter section of substantially half of a maximum static friction to that occurs when the toothed washer constricts the large-diameter section.

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Original) The wiper pivot unit according to claim 1, wherein the locking member includes a toothed washer having a

plurality of locking pieces protruding inward, wherein the washer has an unsevered ring shape.

12. (Previously Presented) A wiper pivot unit comprising:
a pivot shaft having a proximal end and a distal end to which a wiper arm is fixed;

a pivot holder fixed to a vehicle body;

a bearing portion formed in the pivot holder to support rotatably the pivot shaft; and

a locking member for restricting axial movement of the pivot shaft with respect to the bearing portion, wherein the pivot shaft includes a small-diameter section formed over a predetermined length from the distal end side, and a large-diameter section, which has a diameter larger than that of the small-diameter section, formed on the proximal end side, the large-diameter section having an end portion in the proximity of the small-diameter section, wherein the locking member includes a toothed washer having a plurality of locking pieces protruding inward, tips of the locking pieces defining a through hole, and the toothed washer is engaged with the outer surface at the end portion of the large-diameter section to constrict that portion with a predetermined constricting force, and wherein the diameter of the small-diameter section, the diameter of the large-diameter section and the inside diameter of the toothed washer before it is fitted to the pivot shaft are designed to allow the toothed washer to give a kinetic frictional force of substantially half of a maximum static friction to be exhibited when the restriction of axial movement of the pivot

shaft is canceled to allow the pivot shaft to shift with respect to the bearing portion.

13. (Original) The wiper pivot unit according to claim 12, wherein the small-diameter section protrudes entirely from the bearing portion and the large-diameter section is located in the bearing portion in the state where the locking member restricts axial movement of the pivot shaft.

14. (Original) The wiper pivot unit according to claim 12, wherein the small-diameter section has a constant diameter along the axis of the pivot shaft and protrudes from the bearing portion.

15. (Previously Presented) The wiper pivot unit according to claim 12, wherein the pivot shaft further has a fixing section for fixing the wiper arm at the distal end side of the small-diameter section, wherein the small-diameter section is formed over a predetermined length between the fixing section and the large-diameter section.

16. (Original) The wiper pivot unit according to claim 12, wherein the pivot shaft has a tapered surface, which connects the large-diameter section and the small-diameter section.

17. (Previously Presented) The wiper pivot unit according to claim 15, wherein the fixing section has a tapered rotation preventing portion having a knurled surface and a threaded

portion formed on the distal end side of the rotation preventing portion.

18. (Cancelled)

19. (Original) The wiper pivot unit according to claim 12, wherein the locking member includes a toothed washer having a plurality of locking pieces protruding inward, wherein the washer has an unsevered ring shape.

20 - 28 (canceled)

29. (Previously Presented) A wiper pivot unit comprising:
a pivot shaft having an outer surface, a proximal end, and a distal end to which a wiper arm is fixed, wherein the pivot shaft includes a small-diameter section formed over a predetermined length from the distal end side, and a large-diameter section, which has a diameter larger than that of the small-diameter section, formed on the proximal end side, the large-diameter section having an end portion in the proximity of the small-diameter section;

a pivot holder fixed to a vehicle body;

a bearing portion formed in the pivot holder and rotatably supporting the pivot shaft and having a proximal end, a distal end, and an inner surface which faces the outer surface of the pivot shaft; and

a locking member for restricting axial movement of the pivot shaft with respect to the bearing portion, wherein the locking

member is engaged with a predetermined frictional force against an external surface at the end portion of the large-diameter section, wherein when a thrust load of a predetermined value or more is applied to the pivot shaft toward the proximal end, the locking member allows to start axially moving the pivot shaft with respect to the bearing portion, and wherein when the locking member meets with the small diameter section, the thrust load required to move the pivot shaft is reduced by substantially half of the predetermined value.